

Hanson, MA Area A
North Hanson
Spring & West Washington Streets
Area Data Sheet

<u>MHC</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Street</u>	<u>Style/Form</u>	<u>Date</u>
36	White House	16	Spring Street	Classical cottage	unknown
37	Thomas-Cushing House	27	Spring Street	Federal hippled ell house	ca. 1800
38	Soper House	28	Spring Street	Federal gabled double house	1842-43
39	Clark House	48	Spring Street	Greek Revival front gable cut	1849
40	Drew-Soper House	55	Spring Street	Federal center chimney	1801
41	Brown House	72	Spring Street	crossed gambrel	1906
42	Poole House	75	Spring Street	Greek Revival gable block	1851
43	Sprague House	90	Spring Street	Italianate end house	1871
44	Church House	91	Spring Street	Queen Anne end house	1890
45	Soper House	117	Spring Street	Federal center chimney	ca. 1810
46	Ford House	134	Spring Street	Colonial Revival foursquare	1886
47	Ramsdell House	152	Spring Street	Federal cape	1832
48	Ramsdell House	168	Spring Street	Italianate end house	1836-40
49	Wallace House	177	Spring Street	Colonial Revival foursquare	1909
50	Butler House	196	Spring Street	Craftsman gable block	1920
51	Ramsdell House	201	Spring Street	Italianate gable block	1846
52	Elms House	212	Spring Street	Federal cape	1840
53	Ramsdell House	221	Spring Street	Bungalow	1890
54	Soper House	226	Spring Street	Queen Anne end house	1896
55	Cox House	232	Spring Street	Greek Revival end house	1835
56	Arnold House	239	Spring Street	Colonial Revival foursquare	1912
57	Cox House	248	Spring Street	Federal Cape	ca. 1810
58	Bouliette House	249	Spring Street	Craftsman gable block	1914
59	Wales House	4	West Washington Street	Gothic gable block	ca. 1820
60	Cobb House	15	West Washington Street	Federal hippled ell house	ca. 1810

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION See continuation sheet.

The North Hanson area is a residential neighborhood within Hanson running primarily along Spring Street and a small section of West Washington Street. Spring Street runs generally north-south between two of the town's east-west arteries, Whitman Street at its north end and West Washington to the south. In its earliest settlement period, the area was sparsely settled with farms, but as the 19th century progressed, properties were subdivided and the street gradually increased in density, a pattern repeated throughout the town. Currently most houses here sit on small lots of suburban or village size and shape, with frontages of about 100 to 200 feet and depths ranging from 100 to 600 feet. The area thus includes, in addition to an exceptional number of early houses, equal numbers dating to the 19th and early 20th century. Styles represented here include Federal, Greek Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Craftsman, and Colonial Revival. While a small number of large two-and-a-half story houses are found here, in the center chimney, ell house, double house, and four square forms most of the houses are smaller types of a story or a story-and-a-half in height, including capes, gabled blocks, and end houses.

HISTORIC NARRATIVE See continuation sheet.

The North Hanson area is a residential neighborhood in Hanson, one of a number of clusters of housing in the town. While many of Massachusetts' rural communities developed one or more villages, at the meetinghouse, at mill sites, or at crossroads, Hanson developed a generally increasing density covering many sections of the town rather than only one or two. As late as 1830, when most towns had already developed the primary features of a center village, Hanson's meetinghouse stood alone and the only significant clustering in the town was in North Hanson, including the section of West Washington Street at Spring Street and extending along Spring Street to the north. As the 19th century progressed settlement in that area increased even as other areas of the town reached similar densities, including the area known as North Hanson Depot to the west on the railroad at the Abington line; South Hanson Depot also on the rail line on Main Street; South Hanson further to the east on Main Street; Bryantville, also on Main Street and extending into Pembroke; and Bournetown, later Burrage, to the south of these and on the rail line on Pleasant Street. North Hanson remained among the town's densest areas and operated as a commercial center for the town as well, particularly at the West Washington-Spring Street intersection, although many of the buildings associated with this function have been lost.

REFERENCES

White, "History of Houses in Hanson," 1932.

"History of Hanson," 1962.

Smith Map of 1830.

Walling Map of 1856.

Richardson Atlas of 1879.

Walker Atlas of 1903.

 X Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. See NR Criteria Statement attached.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION, continued.

Gable block houses remained popular in Hanson well into the middle of the 19th century and one-and-a-half story examples are by far the most common. An example following the general form is the **Poole House** at **75 Spring Street (#42)**, said to date to 1851. As is so common in Hanson, the block is set with its gable end to the street and includes a small perpendicular four-bay wing connecting the house to its large two-story carriage house, forming a sheltered door yard. The house is trimmed with simple Greek entablatures at the cornice and entry. Later expansions include shed-roofed dormers on the roof of the main block, a sun-room on its rear, and a bay window and a gabled dormer on the wing. The use of a recessed section of the street-facing elevation on this form is a distinctive trait in Hanson and an example of this type is the now greatly altered and expanded **Clark House** at **48 Spring Street (#39)**. The southern section of the building seems to be the house, wing, and carriage house of the original owners. The property has been greatly expanded to the north with a cluster of forms trimmed to resemble the older house, including a low-gabled hyphen connecting to a high gabled block that includes two lower gabled projecting bays on its facade. The **Ramsdell House** at **201 Spring Street (#51)** may have originally been of the gable block type, but later ornament includes consoles along the eaves and the use of contrasting wall covers, clapboard on the first and shingles in the upper story. It has been expanded with gabled wall dormers, two older rear ells, and a modern north wing. A modern garage is located in the rear of the lot. A much later example with a gambrel-roofed main block is the **Brown House** of 1906 at **72 Spring Street (#41)**. The main block parallel to the road includes the entry under an overhanging roof, and the narrow crossed section is also gambrel-roofed and located on the south end, projecting significantly in front of the main block.

Although the most popular New England house type of the 19th century was the end house, in Hanson this form is rarer in its early manifestations and increases in relative popularity as the 19th century progresses. Dating to the second quarter of the century, this house type is associated with the reorientation of the house to the street to produce the gable-fronted house. Unlike the gabled cottages just described, it became common to employ a narrow three-bay facade with a side entry, adding further to the alteration of the model house form with the adoption of the side-hall plan. A North Hanson example is the **Cox House** at **232 Spring Street (#55)**, said to date to 1835. In this example the wide facade has its side entry set close to the south wall, treated with the popular Doric entablature. The house has a low wing on the south side with an enclosed porch across it. It was in the Italianate style that end houses first became common in Hanson. The small but exceptionally well-preserved **Sprague House** is located at **90 Spring Street, (#43)** and said to date to 1871. With its scrolled hood entry, molded window heads, and narrow pilasters and entablature, the house is relatively plain, but the condition of its wing and carriage house is exceptional. A low shed-roofed L-shaped hyphen connects to the outbuilding, which is trimmed to match the house.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION, continued.

and retains its round-headed double-leafed door and matching window in the gable above. These end houses were occasionally elaborated with the addition of projecting bays on the facade and lateral walls or through the addition of a wing extending from its long, lateral wall. The **Ramsdell House at 168 Spring Street (#48)** is a small version with these elaborations, including a gabled bay on the south elevation and a rectangular bay window at the southwest corner. The scrolled hood at the door and the bracketed cornice are evidence of the style, and the house is linked to its two-story former carriage house by a low wing screened by a porch. The date traditionally assigned to the house, 1836-40, seems too early for its present configuration. Another small example with a shed-roofed projecting bay on its south elevation and a full front porch is the **Soper House at 226 Spring Street (#54)** said to date to 1896; a later wing extends the original bay and provides a second entry and a new chimney is located in the re-entrant angle of the house and the bay. The **Church House** of 1890 at **91 Spring Street (#44)** is a variation of the Queen Anne end house, including an unusual facade arrangement and wall dormers along the side elevations.

The next wave of change to enter the region came with a second reorganization of the building trades and the rise of mail-order house plans and indeed mail-order houses. The popular foursquare is two stories in height and square in shape under a hip or pyramidal roof, and is also often expanded through the use of a dormer to light the attic. These four-room plans include a large stair/entry area, a living room, dining room, and kitchen. An early example, which continues to incorporate element of picturesque design, is the **Ford House** of 1886 at **134 Spring Street (#46)**. Its high hip roof adds a hip-roofed dormer on the front slope, a polygonal bay window of two stories projects from the left side of the facade, and a concave-shaped hood covers the side entry. A shed- and flat-roofed addition projects from the south elevation and a hip-roofed two bay garage is located at the rear of the lot. The broad three-bay **House House** of 1909 can be seen at **177 Spring Street (#49)**, also including an array of picturesque masses. The central entry is screened by a gable-roofed porch, partially enclosed and supported by paired Tuscan columns on shingled parapets. Projecting elements include a matching porch on the front pile and a hip-roofed projecting bay on the rear of the north side elevation; a polygonal bay window on the rear pile of the south side elevation; a wide gabled dormer in the front slope of the roof; and a low rear ell. A small gabled garage is located at the rear of the lot. A smaller and simpler example is the **Arnold House** of 1912 at **239 Spring Street (#56)**. Its three bay first floor facade has a side entry and a full porch of Tuscan columns on a shingled parapet. A projecting bay is located at the rear of the south elevation and a small rear ell at the north rear. A side-gabled garage is located at the rear of the lot.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION, continued.

As in most Massachusetts communities, few of the earliest and smallest houses of the colonial period survive in Hanson. But a number of the more substantial and durable types are found here, and in a particularly dense cluster in North Hanson. The central chimney heat source dominated planning and the most common types share the tendency to cluster rooms around a single stack of heat sources. In the most common of the center chimney plans the front pile or tier of rooms is characterized by an entry into a lobby in the chimney bay and a room on either side; in the rear there is usually a large central room, flanked by smaller unheated rooms. Houses of a single story and garret were the most common, known as the Cape Cod house, and usually found in the large five bay version. Said to be the earliest of the houses surviving in the North Hanson area, the **Cox House at 248 Spring Street (#57)** is a simple version of this regionally significant house type. With a rectangular footprint, the house takes the common five-bay or "house" size, and its exterior appearance suggests a traditional double pile plan. The side elevation is ample enough for the plan and its gable is lit with large double hung windows like the lower stories and augmented by tiny fixed sash in the corners, a common fenestration pattern in southeastern Massachusetts. Its central chimney has been replaced with a narrow stove-flue chimney and a small two-bay wing extends from the right or south side of the house. The clapboarded exterior includes little ornament. The **Wales House at 4 West Washington Street (#59)** seems to have a Cape at its core, although Greek and Gothic ornament have been added to it. The main block facing on West Washington has sidelights flanking its entry and high facade gables centered above each pair of single story windows. A Greek Doric porch runs along the Spring Street elevation of the house. The rear ell has a porch and facade gable on the Spring Street side and an extended porch roof on the opposite side, and is linked to a gable-roofed outbuilding now serving as a garage. Other houses of similar form and little ornament include the **Ramsdell House at 152 Spring Street (#47)** and the **Elms House at 212 Spring Street (#52)**. In each the probable large central chimney is gone and small modern additions cluster at the buildings' rear; the Elms house has been sided and had a modern enclosed entry porch added to the center door. The traditionally assigned dates of these last two houses, 1832 and 1840 respectively, attest to the enduring popularity of this size and plan type.

Large two-story houses of central chimney form can also be found in the North Hanson area. During the 18th and early 19th century of their popularity, they were constructed primarily in the five-bay, center-entry variation, with gable roofs. The **Isaac Soper House**, said to date to about 1800, at **55 Spring Street (#40)**, is a large and well-preserved example of this type. Its central mass is a large rectangular block with five regular bays across the facade and side elevation fenestration suggestive of the central chimney plan. Its cornice is treated with moldings and dentils while its entry is treated with full sidelights and a plain pilaster and entablature surround. Extending from the south rear of this block is a low single story ell with a secondary entry on its south wall screened by a turn-of-the-century porch. Its outbuilding consists of two

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION, continued.

offset gabled blocks, the forward one clapboarded and treated as a garage, the rear a shingled shed. Local tradition claims that when **Nathaniel Soper** built his house at **117 Spring Street (#45)** ten years later, he aimed to make it bigger and better than his brother's house. The large five-bay, double-pile block is certainly more elaborately decorated, with coins at the corners and an enriched cornice which includes moldings and the arched pendants popular on Federal-period dwellings. Its enclosed porch closely resembles the better-preserved example at the Cobb House at 15 West Washington Street (below), treated with a molded and denticular cornice and pilasters but missing its supporting columns. A lower but still two-story ell extends from the south rear side of the main block, leading to a low single story perpendicular wood shed, and finally to an exceptionally large and well-preserved carriage house trimmed with pilasters and an entablature along its long walls.

Larger and more fashionable than these center chimney houses are the Georgian examples of the late 18th and early 19th century. The hallmark of this type is the plan of a double pile of rooms opening off a central through passage, made possible in New England through the substitution of paired chimneys for the single stack. In New England generally, builders designed houses that were four-room rectangles, known as double houses, as well as smaller three-room plans known as ell houses because of their footprint. Hanson has a small number of these large and ambitious houses, including a handful clustered in North Hanson. The **Cobb House** is a Federal hip-roofed ell house located at **15 West Washington Street (#60)**. The main block has a chimney at each end and its rear ell extends from the left or east rear side. Its main block is treated with a molded cornice with unusually large dentils and corner coins. The distinctive enclosed hip-roofed entry porch has a pair of Tuscan columns supporting an overhanging section of its hip roof, treated with an entablature ornamented with small pendants above the frieze and small gouged triglyphs in the architrave. The two-story rear ell has its own interior chimney and modern single-story extensions. Its carriage house is a separate building set to the right rear of the house, oriented with its ridge parallel to the road. Another Federal hip-roofed ell house, the **Thomas House**, is located at **27 Spring Street (#37)**, a strikingly similar house, sharing the form as well as the ornament of the Cobb House. Its lower carriage house is similarly sited but located at the end of a shed-roofed wood house that connects it to the rear ell of the main house. Opposite the Thomas House on **Spring Street at 28 (#38)** is the double house said to have been built by **Jeremiah Soper** in about 1843. The regular main block has end chimneys and, in addition to the modern wing on its north side, has a single story rear ell linking the house through an ell-plan shed-roofed wood house to the gable-roofed carriage house. The later alterations to the house and inserted reproduction elements have obscured some of its early character.

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Property Address
Spring Street
Area
North Hanson A

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION, continued.

Small single-story and one-and-a-half story houses were also constructed from these popular plans. The smallest of these were small gabled blocks of three or four rooms, and these survive in North Hanson. The **Ramsdell House** at **221 Spring Street**, said to date to 1890, **#53** resembled a bungalow, dominated by a broad porch formed as an extension of the roof line, but its square footprint suggests a smaller plan. The rectangular **Boutiette House** of 1914 at **249** **#58** **Spring Street** has deeply overhanging eaves and a central recessed entry now behind a screened porch. A modern garage is located at the rear of the lot. The **Butler House** of 1920 at **196** **#50** **Spring Street** is a simple four bay gabled block with a full screened porch. The **White House** at **16 Spring Street** began as a shop and was converted to a classically detailed residence. **#36**

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NARRATIVE HISTORY, continued.

By 1830, North Hanson already included eleven homesteads, most of which remain there today. The neighborhood had by then become the location of one of the town's district schools, with primary school number eight located to the west on the north side of West Washington Street. A cluster of Cox houses were located on the east side of Spring Street at its north end, the oldest built by Ephraim Cox, 248 Spring Street, with other Cox houses on either side. Ephraim Cox's house and outbuildings were valued at \$200 and other holdings included fourteen acres of land, a horse, a cow, and a swine. Seth Cox lived in an old house which, with outbuildings, was valued at only \$75, and once stood on a seven acre lot to the south, while Ephraim Jr.'s house was valued at \$75 and his shop and barn at another \$75, sitting on the corner thirteen acre lot. J. Green's house to the south on the opposite side of the street is gone, but Gad Soper was in residence in his uncle Nathaniel's House, 117 Spring Street, a property which tax records suggest he shared with the widow Eunice Soper. Each half of the house was valued at \$300, a reflection of its large size, with Gad holding a \$100 barn, 55 acres of land, a horse, two cows, a heifer, and a swine, while the widow held 23 acres, a chaise, and \$1500 in cash. Jeremiah Soper occupied the Isaac Soper house to the south, 55 Spring Street, including a large house valued at \$500, a \$60 barn, a \$300 cabinetmaker's shop, and a two acre lot. The Thomas House, 27 Spring Street, was in the possession of Rachel Cushing, who owned a third of the house valued at \$350, as did her sister Ann, each owning a third of an acre and a third of a barn, while Rachel held a third of a corn mill and Ann held \$2500. Widow Sarah Wales lived in the \$300 house at 4 West Washington, with a \$40 barn sharing the one acre lot. The heirs of Cornelius Cobb held the house their father had built across the street, 15 West Washington Street, including two houses valued at \$950, a store, barn and outbuilding valued at \$525, sixty acres of land, cash totaling \$13,000, another house and lot, a cow, a heifer, and a chaise.

By the mid-19th century, the number of houses in the neighborhood had grown to twenty, and again many of these survive. The nearest school is now farther to the east beyond Liberty Street, but several shops and stores are noted on the maps of 1856 and 1879, in particular the blacksmith's shop, cabinetmaker's shop, tin shop, shoe shop, and two stores, all near the intersection of Spring and West Washington streets. The area continued to include a handful of farmers, but the number of shops and small holdings increase, indicative of the increased role of shoe-making in the regional economy, as the tax assessments for 1879 of the new-comers attest. At the site of the Seth Cox House, 232 Spring Street, William had built a new house, valued at \$350, a \$50 barn, all on an acre and a half of mowing and tillage, occupied by this time by Almira T. Cox. Similar small holdings include Edwin Clark's at 48 Spring Street, assessed for a \$550 house and an acre-and-a-half of tillage and mowing, and Isaac Ramsdell's at 152 Spring Street, including a house (\$350) and a shop (\$50) and three acres of tillage and mowing. John S. Elms' new property, 212 Spring Street, included a house (\$450), barn (\$100), shop (\$60), and sixteen acres of tillage, mowing, pasture, and wood lot, but curiously no animals. Elbridge Ramsdell's

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NARRATIVE HISTORY, continued.

property was quite similar, including a house (\$475), a barn (\$175), a shop (\$100), and over twenty-four acres of tillage, mowing, pasture, and wood lot. A more traditional complex that allowed some agriculture as well as home manufacture was Lear Ramsdell's property, 168 Spring Street, which included a house (\$475), a barn (\$150), a shop (\$60), a horse, a cow, and over eighteen acres of tillage, mowing, pasture, and wood lot. Blacksmith Elias C. Poole's holdings included a house (\$800), a barn (\$250), his blacksmith's shop (\$50), a horse, colt, cow, buggy, and over six acres of tillage, mowing, and wood lot.

The largest increase in the number of houses in the area came at the turn of the century when nine more houses were added between 1880 and 1920. The occupations provided for residents in the neighborhood in the directory for 1903 captures the continuities and changes within the town's economy. Elias C. Poole, although 84 years old, still described himself as a blacksmith, William Cox remained a farmer, and Edwin Clark was retired. Shoe-making remained important, as Elliot W. Thrasher and C.O. Prouty were reported as lasters and Edward B. Soper and James W. Lewis as shoemakers. F.Q. Barker represented the continuing importance of lumber in the economy and H.B. Harding ran a grocery and grain concern at the corner. Horse-drawn transportation occupied many, as J.B. White ran a massive livery, Otis Ramsdell did teaming and jobbing, and Joseph Prouty made harness. New service employments were represented by William G. Elms, superintendent of the cemetery. Female heads of household still often reported no occupation, but Abby E. Ford was a schoolteacher and Abbie J. Clark boarded with Edwin Clark while working as a bookkeeper.

Several of the commercial structures that clustered at the intersection of Spring and West Washington streets survived long enough to be photographed. Harding's Store at the foot of Spring Street took a traditional gable-fronted form, of three bays across the facade, with a centered door between large-paned store windows, and two-and-one-half stories in height, trimmed in Italianate style. It was flanked by support buildings, including an end-gabled carriage house and a small shed. Further along West Washington Street was Soper Hall, a two-story, hip-roofed building of five bays with entries at bays two and four which had been remodeled and moved. On Spring Street the low single story Chase's Waiting Room was five bays across with entry into bay one and a flat roof marked with a parapet.

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Area **North Hanson A**



4 West Washington St.



16 Spring St.

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15 West Washington St.

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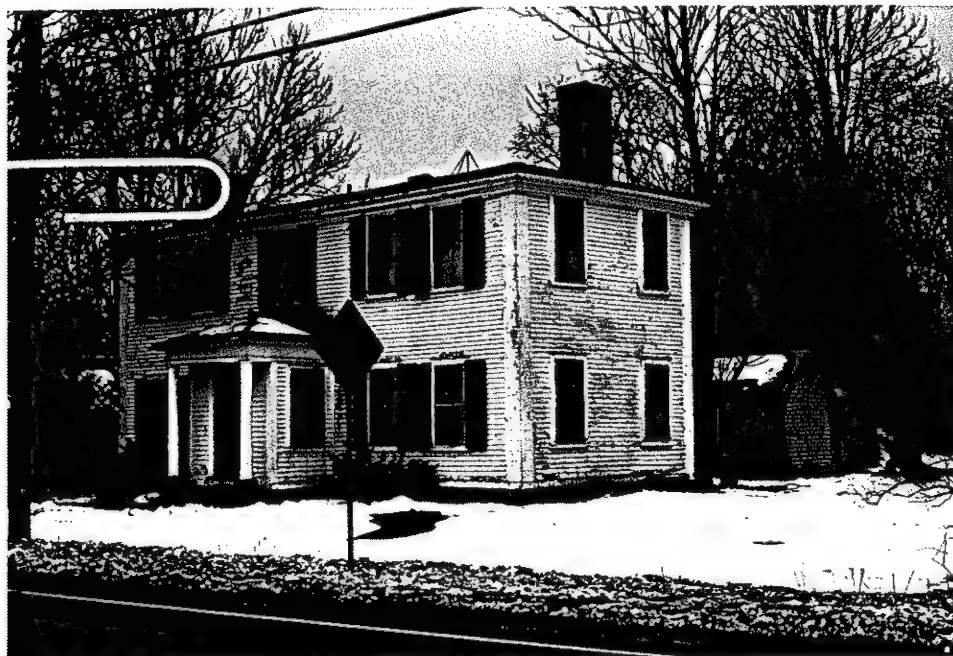
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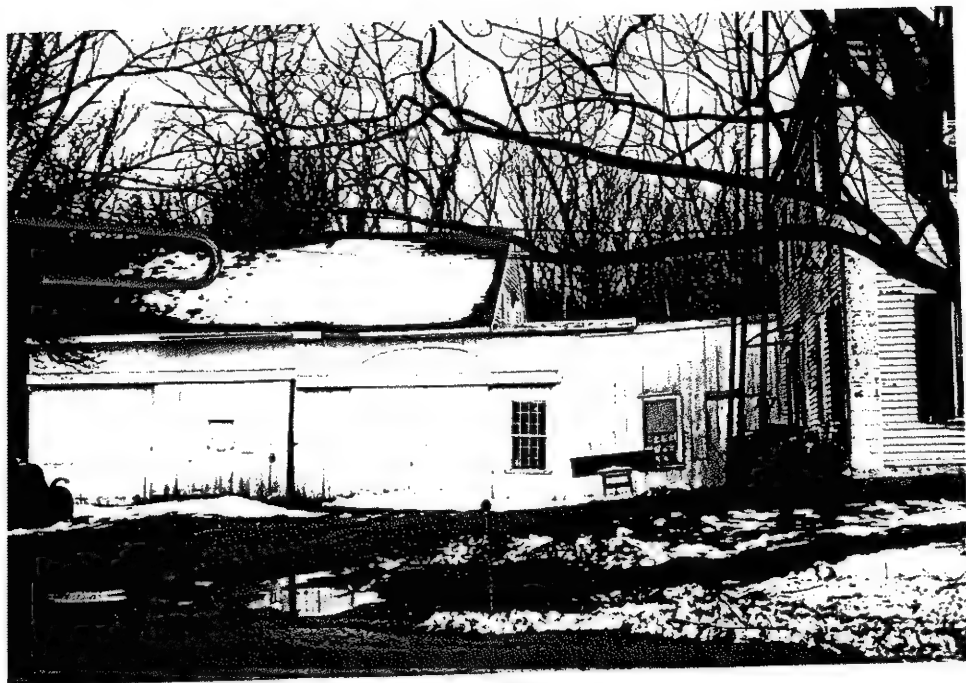
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27 Spring St



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20 Spring St.



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48 Spring St.



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Area North Hanson A



55 Spring St.



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Area North Hanson A

75 Spring St.



72 Spring St.



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Area North Hanson A



90 Spring St



91 Spring St.

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Area **North Hanson A**

117 Spring St.



134 Spring St.

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Area North Hanson A



152 Spring St.



177 Spring St.

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Area North Hanson A



196 Spring St



201 Spring St



212 Spring St

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Area North Hanson *A*



221 Spring St



232 Spring St.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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Area North Hanson A



239 Spring



248 Spring St.



249 Spring St.-

FORM A - AREA

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Assessor's #

92/ 4-6, 20

USGS Quad

Whitman

Area

A

Form #

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100/ 9-13, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25a, 26-28, 30-32

108/1-3, 11-13, 34

Town **Hanson**

Place **North Hanson**

Name of Area **North Hanson**

Present Use **residential**

Construction Dates

18th century - 1930

Overall Condition **good**

Major Intrusions **small number of
modern buildings**

Acreage **about 25 acres**

Recorded by **Dempsey/Driemeyer**

Organization **Hanson Historical
Commission**

Date **May 1996**

Sketch Map Attached



INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

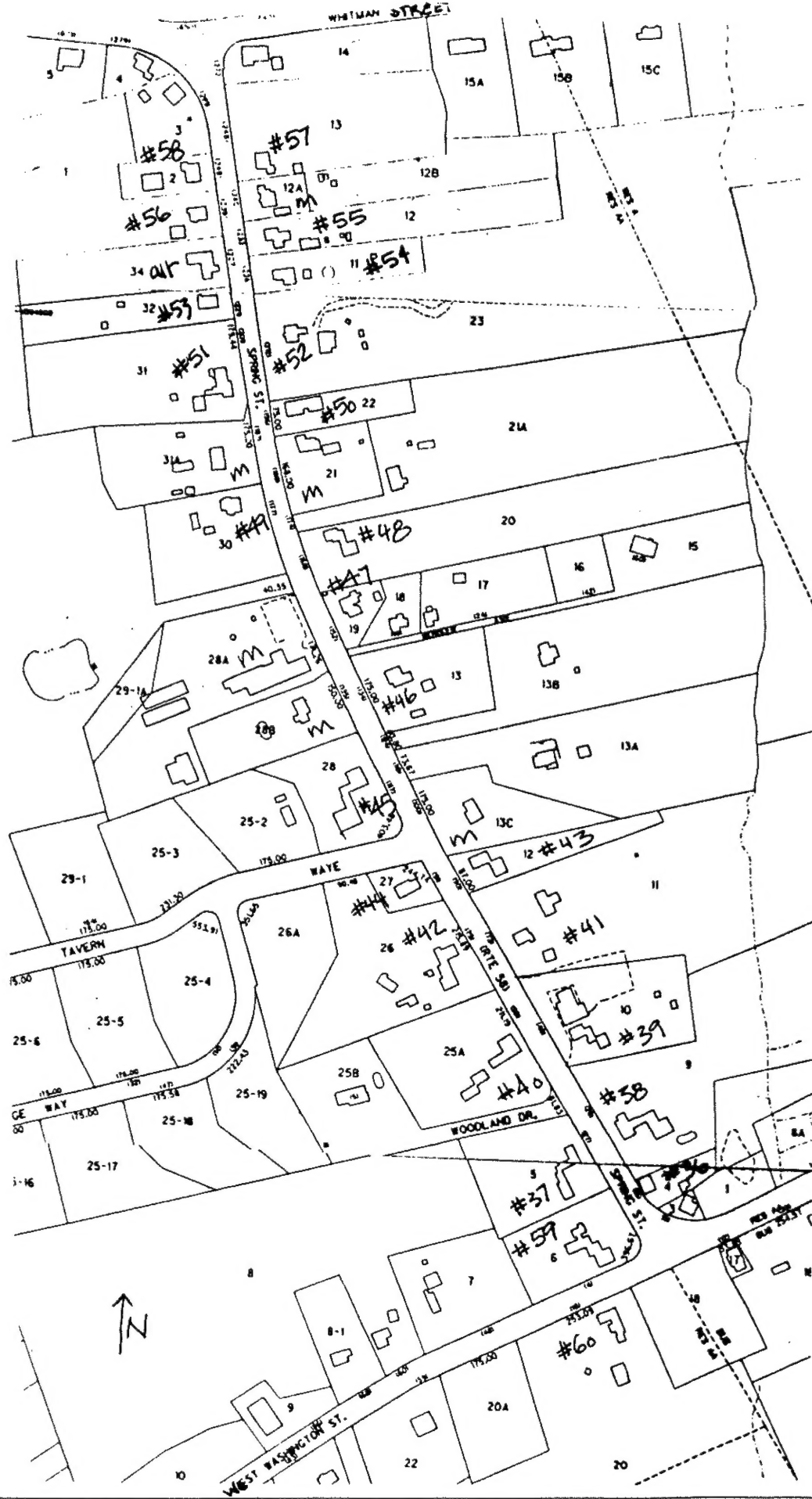
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Area **North Hanson**



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National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form



Check all that apply:

☐ Individually eligible.

☐ Eligible only in a historic district.

☐ Contributing to a potential district.

☒ Potential historic district.

Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Statement of Significance by **Dempsey/Driemeyer.**

The North Hanson area is significant as the primary surviving cluster of early buildings in the town of Hanson, in a settlement configuration distinctive to the town and probably the region. In this area, many of the town's primary house types can be found, with a particularly strong cluster of the earliest center chimney and double and ell house forms. The area also served as one of the town's several commercial foci, but much of this evidence has been lost. The North Hanson area meets criteria A and C at the local level and retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.